

OAR Senior IT Managers' Meeting, December 6, 2001

The meeting began with a discussion of the IT Restructuring/Performance Elements. Nancy Huang presented a briefing that included an interactive portion in which the IT Managers participated with comments and additions to the presentation. The focus of the briefing was communication and coordination within the CIO Office's virtual organization. The contents of the briefing were as follows:

1. New Reporting Structure

CIO to report to Deputy AA in consultation with the NOAA CIO.

CIO & CFO will act as partners

Senior IT Managers' performance element:

- IT Security
- IT for Office support
- IT Procurement
- Network Support
- Website Support

Challenges:

- Geographic Dispersion
- Budget & Resources Constraints
- Increasing Laws and Regulations
- Increasing Oversight from OMB
- Increasing Emphasis on ROI
- Increasing IT Security Concerns

A Balancing Act

- Science Mission/OMB Mandates
- Leadership/Management
- Listening/Talk
- Decision/Discussions
- Centers of Excellence/Headquarters
- Innovation/Standards
- Distributed/Consolidated
- Requirements/Assumptions
- Commitment/Compliance
- Proactive/Reactive
- Team/Individual
- Empowerment/Control
- Grass Roots/Top Down
- Balanced Life/Increasing Workload

Plan of Actions

Develop a High Trust and High Performance Team
Improve Communication & Coordination
Maximize Influence

Develop a High Trust Team

Core Values:

- Trust – Creativity – Respect – Commitment – Integrity
- Pro-activeness – Accountability – Synergy
- Quality - Win-Win – Responsiveness – Flexibility
- Openness – Diversity – Service – Innovation - IT as Science Enabler

Team Guidelines:

- Respect each other - Listen with empathy - Ask questions
- Open to new ideas (suspend judgement)
- Support each other in learning
- Attack the issue, not the person - Maintain confidentiality - Have fun

Improve Communication and Coordination

- Ensure information dissemination and exchange
- Clarify expectations
- Provide feedback
- Put all issues on the table
- Respond in a timely manner
- Accept and respect final decisions
- Meetings frequency based on issues

Expectations:

Headquarters' Staff's responsibilities

- Advocate for the field
- Provide value added service
- Reduce paperwork burden for the field
- Secure funding for unfunded mandates

Senior IT Managers' responsibilities

- Respond to requests from DOC/NOAA/OAR
- Communicate Labs' concerns to CIO
- Communicate IT related issues within Labs
- Lead IT related activities in the Lab/Program Office

Centers of Excellence:

- GFDL & FSL: HPC
- PMEL: Management & Administrative Systems
- NSSL & ETL: OAR website support

IT Architecture

NOAA

- AWG: Kevin Kelleher, Rich Beeler, Nancy Soreide, Rica Semones
- Executive Summary: Nancy Soreide
- Data Access: Don Mock, Nancy Soreide
- Networks: Russ Richards
- IT Security: Jerry Janssen, Jeremy Warren

- Administrative Systems: Warren Keenan, Rica Semones
- HPC: Bruce Ross, John Sheldon, Brian Gross, Peter Mandics, Nancy Soreide

OAR Team

- Leaders: Kevin Kelleher, Rich Beeler
- Participation: Senior IT Managers and TCCR

OAR Representation on External Teams & Groups:

- NOAA HPC Networking Panel: Russ Richards, Bob Kohler, Kevin Kelleher
- ESDIM: Nancy Soreide, Don Mock, Chris Miller, Kevin Kelleher, Bill Murray, Bob Kohler
- NATT: Jerry Janssen, Russ Richards, Bob Kohler, Gary Skaggs
- Boulder IT Council
- NOAA West Network Advisory Council, Russ Richards
- Norman Network Advisory Group: Gary Skaggs
- CAMS IT Users' Group: Rica Semones
- Messaging Configuration Board: Jeremy Warren
- Network Operation Center Council: Jeremy Warren
- Property Custodian: Jeremy Warren
- OAR IT Security Officers: Rica Semones, Jeremy Warren
- Office Automation WG: Rica Semones
- Web Server Survey WG: Don Mock, Jeremy Warren
- Section 508 Accessibility WG – Allison Soussi-Tanani
- NOAA Grants OnLine System: Rica Semones
- Homeland Security: Jeremy Warren
- DOC/NOAA Webmasters Affinity Group – Allison Soussi-Tanani

Maximize Influence

- Build credibility
- Cultivate important relationships
- Take initiative and leadership
- Create shared vision
- Develop effective strategy
- Represent OAR with a well coordinated front

2. IT Security

The group discussed the growing importance of IT security in Government. The Managers stressed the importance of getting the most senior managers involved in supporting security efforts. The NOAA IT Security Awareness Course was discussed, and Jeremy Warren volunteered to send the NOAA database of trainees out to the field. Relative to the course, the Managers requested if there was a way to “shortstop” messages from NOAA to all the field, such as the one Becky Vasvary sent out about the awareness training. There was mixed discussion on this. Some people expressed the view that these messages cause confusion, inasmuch as many field people don’t know

who she is. However, others felt that NOAA-wide messages emphasize the importance of the topic and lend credibility to the message. SANS training was also discussed, and Rica Semones said she would send out an email soliciting sources of good IT security training in addition to SANS.

Jeremy Warren provided a short briefing on Homeland Security.

3. Section 508

Allison Soussi-Tanani is the defacto NOAA lead on Section 508, accessibility. She briefed the group via conference call on current issues and status of NOAA efforts.

4. A-76

Rica Semones and Bruce Ross led a discussion on the upcoming A-76 study of IT positions in OAR. OAR will need to compete 22 of its positions over the next 18 months. The importance of the Sr. IT Managers' involvement was emphasized several times, especially with the importance of capturing all IT functions performed across all Labs. Don Mock expressed interest in a rotational assignment to HQ to work on the A-76 study.

5. Procurement Review and Approval Process

This discussion resulted in consensus that FDMS might be able to provide a report with adequate information for IT procurement review. Nancy Soreide agreed to look into the development of such a report.

The issue of using FDMS for A-11 reporting (operational plan spreadsheets) was brought up, and Rich Beeler agreed to revisit that topic, working with FDMS data manager(s). Lack of granularity in existing object class codes makes accurate detailed reporting a challenge. Nancy also was going to look at FDMS for the possibility of adding fields to possibly break down the object class codes for more detail.

6. Rotational Assignments

In the new fiscal year without travel ceilings imposed, Nancy encouraged everyone to consider the rotational assignment program. Nancy reminded people that rotations at HQ were welcome, but also cross-Lab and HQ to Lab. It was also noted that, although the group had previously supported Joint Institutes people for rotational assignments, a recent review of the J.I. program indicated that the program would most likely not allow this type work assignment for J.I. people.

7. Teleconferencing/Videoconferencing

The advantages and merits of videoconferencing were discussed, and the group noted that it would be especially useful for working groups composed of members from more than one Lab, and that savings in travel costs would be significant. After extensive discussion, the group consensus was that Headquarters take the lead by procuring a videoconferencing system compatible with the "PictureTel" units already in use at FSL and available to many Labs through collocation with other NOAA entities. It was noted

that all Laboratories have access to borrowed videoconferencing systems, except GFDL. Borrowing from co-located NOAA entities may not be the best situation because system owners always have first rights for use of the system, and it is getting more difficult to borrow systems because of increasing use by the owner organizations. Headquarters would continue to use teleconferencing (in combination with videoconferencing) for those organizations that cannot, or choose not, to purchase or borrow a videoconference system.

Telework

Telework policy will soon be disseminated to the field by OAR HQ. Technical issues were discussed, and the consensus was that the use of laptops and docking stations might be the best technology currently available, especially for the IT security aspect of telework.

8. General Discussion

Several topics of general interest and concern were discussed, and two key points were emphasized.

- Use field expertise in management issues, including policy development.
- Advocate for resources to carry out unfounded mandates.

9. Attachments

Rica distributed a listing of data calls for FY 2001. It helps to keep track of data calls, especially when trying to demonstrate to NOAA and DOC that we get an awful lot of them! That list is attached.

ACTION ITEMS:

- √ Nancy Huang
 - Sponsor Leadership Training
 - Make plans to procure videoconferencing at HQ
- √ Jeremy Warren
 - Send out NOAA User Awareness training database
- √ Jeremy Warren/Rica Semones
 - Meet with N-CIRT members to discuss standard operating procedures for notifying OAR ITSOs of incidents
- √ Nancy Soreide
 - Determine whether FDMS might be the best source for reports to review IT procurements
- √ Rich Beeler
 - Work with PMEL programmers to modify a report to use for A-11 (IT Operational Plan) spreadsheet reporting information.
- √ John Fenton
 - Work on the issue of lack of granularity in object class codes for IT reporting. Analyze possibilities and experiment with using "fake" object class

FY 2001 Data Calls

Numbers are responses that were due.

A-11 Spreadsheets - 2 per Lab (3 for GFDL, FSL), 19 organizational elements reporting on 24 systems

IT Operational Plan Narratives (19)

Projects & Tasks 2000 information (12)

IT Security Plans (24)

IT Risk Assessments (24)

IT Contingency Plans (19)

GISRA Reporting (19)

GISRA Questionnaires (8)

IT Restructuring input (13)

Procurement Processes (13)

IT Security Needs (for additional funding request) (14)

DOC Security Alerts (19)

Patch Management

Account Closing Procedures

Perimeter/Boundary Devices

Information Collection/Gathering Data from the Public (13)

Adobe Acrobat funding (13)

Corel licensing (13)

Bibliographic software (13)

IDL (Rich Beeler did this one)

WinZip (Chris Cornwall did this one)

Data Calls Handled at HQ (vs. going out to Labs)

IT Strategic Plan (Forms 300 required from GFDL, FSL)

Actions in Response to Code Red Worm

Password Management